

THE HORSE
and his
MANAGEMENT

Dexter

1847

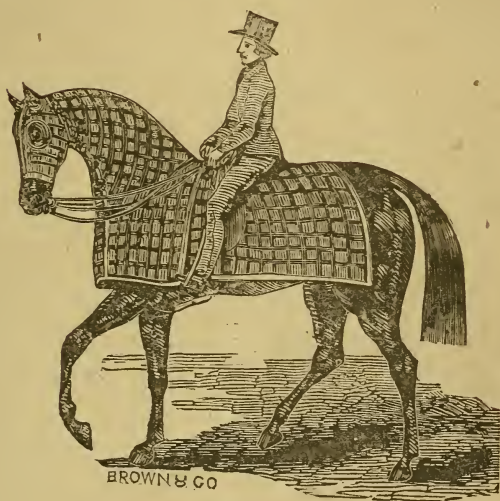
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JOHN A. SEAVERNS

THE HORSE,



AND HIS MANAGEMENT.

A

PLEA FOR THE HORSE,

IN A FEW

REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS

UPON HIS

TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT.

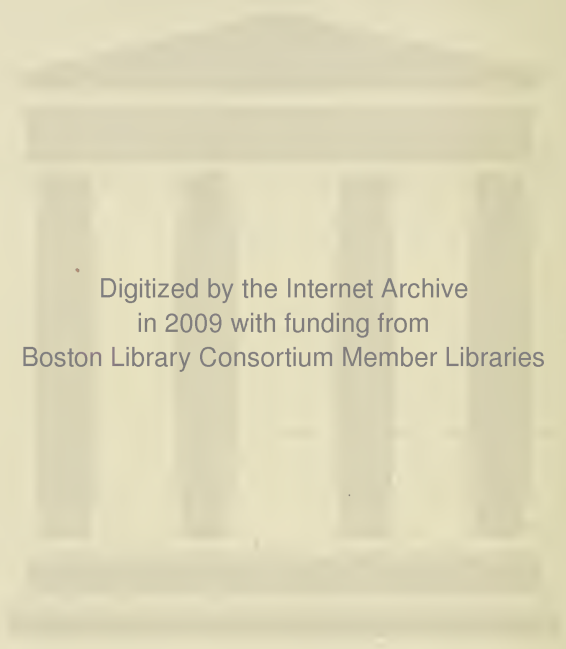
By John H. Baxter,

It ought to be esteemed a happiness to mankind, that our HUMANITY has a wider sphere to exert itself in than bare justice. It is no more than the obligation of our very birth to practise equity to our kind; but HUMANITY may be extended through the whole order of creatures, even to the meanest: such actions of CHARITY are the overflowings of a mild good nature on all below us. It is certainly the part of a well-natured man to take care of his Horses and Dogs, not only in the expectation of their labor, but even when their old age has made them incapable of service. We cannot think it extravagant to imagine, that mankind are no less, in proportion, accountable for the ill use of their dominion over creatures of the lower rank of beings, than for the exercise of their tyranny over their own species. The more entirely the inferior creation is submitted to our power, the more answerable we should seem for our mismanagement of it, as the very condition of nature renders these creatures incapable of receiving any recompense in another life for their ill-treatment in this.

GUARDIAN.

BOSTON:

1847.



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THE
MANAGEMENT OF HORSES.

“He that is soon angry, dealeth foolishly; and the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.”

It has been observed, that there are now almost as many Horses in our city as there were men in it fifty years ago; and certainly their actual number appears to be a near approach to that estimate. These goodly animals are under the charge and direction of “all sorts of men.” Some are kindly governed and guided by the hands of mercy, while many a one has “an hard master.” The great sagacity so generally shown by them is truly wonderful; yet they are continually suffering from the smarting *lash*, or the brutal *blow*, for not exhibiting more. An old writer remarks, that they are “the most GENEROUS and USEFUL of all quadrupeds”; and he might have added with great truth, we think, much more so than a no inconsiderable number of bipeds, who, though they manifest but little of the former trait towards them, are quite ready to require of them an unfeeling exaction of the latter characteristic.

It is a good Horse that never stumbles, “is a proverb,” says the same author, “that intimates to us, that there is no creature that ever went upon four *legs*, but has made some false step or other; and that many mother’s son of us who

goes upon two, has his *slips* and his *imperfections*. And so the French say,

Il n'y a bon CHEVAL qui ne bronche ;

or, as it may be plainly expressed in English,

There is no good HORSE that does not kick.

The inflamed tempers of men, called forth in the government of this best of creatures, have been the cause of much of their unruly obstinacy; the smallest deviation from the course they may be desired to take being generally sure to incur their anger, and too often their abuse. A more gentle means of kindness, like persuasion with their own species, is much more sure and effective in subduing their wayward spirits—too often caused by reckless force and violence. It was not intended that they who were created in the image of their Maker, and clothed with “dominion over every living thing that moveth upon the earth,” should act as cruel tyrants in subjecting the animal species to their wills, and “if there be any one,” as an eminent author has said, “who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise or his happiness.” Had man been made the creature of instinct instead of the being so “noble in reason,” as he is, we fear he would bear but a sad comparison with the poor beast who now bleeds and suffers from his iron rule. “There are some brutes,” says Locke, “that seem to have as much knowledge and reason as some that are called men.” It is true, that a great regard for animals is very often expressed, but it too seldom extends beyond the tongue. Our sympathy should urge us to a more practical performance of our duty, if it does not incite us to acts of generosity. The being who is deficient in benevolence for the helpless and dependent brute, has not much claim to be considered above him. It would seem, that the beneficent ordinance of one day in a week as a day of rest for the ever-toiling beast, would

lead and teach men to imitate the watchful care of *their own* benignant MASTER.

We are aware that the feeling we personally entertain, and which we would have men exercise towards animals, is not unfrequently characterized as an extreme sensibility, and does not always escape the ridicule of frigid and insensible minds, which are too common, and too often strangers to the better sympathies of our nature. A prominent individual in our vicinity, was, some years ago, the owner of the celebrated Horse, Bucephalus, for whom he had long cherished a great fondness. Becoming infirm from age, and a burthen to himself, as well as to his keeper, his kind-hearted master, unwilling to trust his favorite steed to the care of those less merciful than himself, resolved to release him from his accumulating miseries by taking his life; he therefore applied the deadly steel directly to his heart, in order to subject him to merely a moment's torture. Still retaining a changeless attachment for him, he caused his body to be buried in his garden, and erected a stone with an appropriate inscription upon it over his grave, where it may now be seen by those who visit the spot. An act so benign in its intention cannot but excite an unmingled admiration of the feelings which prompted it. The cold and thoughtless observer, however, may smile at *such* a philanthropy, but the spirit of the "good Samaritan" is ever kind, benevolent, and compassionate.

As it has been observed of another "generous" animal — "he who has a mind to beat a Dog will easily find a stick;" and Horses, as well as dogs, (who "are honest creatures and ne'er betray their masters") have always had a practical application of the proverb. It has been said of men, that "the world is too much governed," and we know not why the same remark may not as truly apply to horses; for ourselves, we think its application to the latter much more appropriate. Almost every one has probably often seen

exhibitions of the remarkable docility and playfulness of the horse, when under the gentle discipline of those who have a proper regard for him; and we think, by a continually kind usage, there would be seldom any difficulty in his easy and perfect management, his stubborn and fractious disposition arising principally from the ill-treatment of those who misgovern him. Horses, comparatively, are less irritable than men, but are ever more timid, from the constant fear of a kick or a blow from those who have the charge of them. The love of the horse is truly an ennobling trait in the character of any one; and we believe we are not often mistaken in estimating the general dispositions of such persons as composed of the kindest humanity. It may be supposed that we entertain an opposite opinion where the reverse of such a feeling is manifested towards him. The labor of the horse gives ease and sustenance to his often insatiable owner, who repays him with stripes and oppression as a return for the great and necessary benefits he receives from him. The hearts of some men seem to have become indurate, and we have sometimes been almost led to think, that they may have lost their original shape, and been resolved into the form of the "almighty dollar," so frequent are the departures from its noblest element — a generous philanthropy. A very large number of persons obtain their whole subsistence from the work of their horses, which, we should suppose, would secure to them the best attention and care, for when they fail, their "occupation's gone."

"He that's ungrateful has no fault but one,
All other crimes may pass for virtues in him."

"God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," says the sentimental Sterne, but man's benevolence is in a selfish aim for the "golden fleece" that shields and protects *him* from the same unfeeling blast, unmindful of any return to

"The patient, useful creature, born to bear
The warm and woolly fleece that clothes her murderer."

It is a common usage for most persons entrusted with the driving of teams, to be supplied with a whip, the handle of which being large and heavy, some of them of a sufficient size and weight to destroy a horse at a single blow. There are few persons who have not been the frequent and indignant witnesses to the exercise of this bludgeon over many a horse's head, too often for the most trivial cause;—an act too vile and heartless to be committed by even the most depraved wretch who has the semblance of a human being. Drivers are likewise frequently seen beating the knees of their horses with the same torturing instrument, and often using it upon their backs in driving, in like base manner. Its use should not be tolerated in a Christian community; and the owners of vehicles who allow this villanous weapon to remain in the hands of their men, who are too apt to use it if they have it, should receive no employ from any humane citizen.

Numberless horses are ruined yearly by the unbridled tempers of men. A circumstance of a most revolting character occurred about a year ago. A driver had been directed to harness and put the horse he usually drove into a cart or truck, for the purpose of transporting some merchandise. In attempting to place the bit in his mouth, the animal, as is supposed, showed some disinclination to receive it, which is not uncommon. He seized his tongue and tore a large portion of it (five inches) from his mouth, the fragment retaining its tremulous motion for some time after it was thrown upon the floor. An act more abominable can scarcely be imagined, and for which the utmost severity of the law could inflict no adequate punishment, if it had been enforced. What mind, even for a moment, can dwell upon such a deed without experiencing the most extreme horror? The owner of the poor creature stated that he had lost five horses during the previous fifteen months, though he did not seem disposed to attribute any improper violence to his men. Others, we are

informed, lose a similar proportion yearly. We have since learned that the horse above alluded to, after a respite of some months, has been again placed in his former situation, and eats and drinks with sufficient facility to enable him to perform his work.

The whipping and other abuse of horses have become very frequent and disagreeable occurrences in our streets, especially in thoroughfares leading to the various depots. Very often, and we may say, generally overloaded, more particularly when our streets are in bad condition, they are frequently maimed and goaded to an unfeeling extent, as residents and others can testify. In the transportation of stone, lumber, &c., it often happens that too few horses are employed for the excessive weight borne upon the teams which convey it; and we are continually called to see them urged and forced to a shameful violation of their strength, sometimes to an extent which seems almost sufficient to separate their limbs from their bodies; and this too, in the presence of persons bearing the external appearance of men, who generally look carelessly on with a most disinterested indifference. These things should not exist, and we want to see a spirit enkindled in the community which decrees that they *shall not* exist. Let us be what we claim to be, HUMANE; or no longer assume to ourselves a superiority over an instinctive race in many respects transcending our own.

Horses are likewise too often subjected to another species of cruelty. During the most intense cold nights, they are permitted and compelled to stand mercilessly exposed, and without the least protection, in our public streets, hour after hour, chilled, and lingering, in the most extreme cases, for the thoughtless votaries of pleasure and amusement. Fast driving is too often permitted; and the practice of leaving horses, attached to vehicles, unattended by any one in our most thronged streets, where they are continually liable to be frightened by various causes, frequently running away,

and endangering the lives of many persons, is a violation of an ordinance of the city, and should be discontinued. A criminal neglect too often probably exists, after they have been worn down by severe daily labor; but a common humanity should not permit them to suffer from a want of necessary food or care, though, it is feared, that many are sparingly supplied and negligently attended to. 'Though required to "work while the day lasts," men would greatly subserve their own interests, should they, unfortunately, have no other inducement to extend their lenity or pity towards their horses, if, instead of employing them almost every hour from sunrise to sunset, in extreme heat, they would allow them to remain in their stables for a few extra hours in the middle of the day; the incessant and immoderate labor imposed upon them during the late excessively hot weather, being a melancholy expression of the inhumanity of some of their owners.

Let those who treat their horses with cruelty be noted by every observer, the name and number of the vehicle, which the authorities of the city should see are registered upon it, be taken down, and given to those who employ them, that they may withdraw their business, and entrust it to those who possess the kind and benevolent feelings of men.

The subject of lessening the present length of the trucks of our city, is of much smaller importance than the too frequent practice of overloading and improperly balancing them. Let no more be placed upon them than should be justly imposed upon the number of horses attached to them, and their dimensions may not be subject to so much objection; but while they continue to be overloaded, as they almost constantly are, thereby injuriously and cruelly straining the horses that draw them, the public may well insist upon their curtailment.

Whatever the existing laws may be in regard to the abuse of animals, they are generally inoperative, as few persons, individually, are disposed to take the trouble and responsi-

bility of entering complaints ; and there seems to be no remedy for lessening it but public opinion, which is always a sovereign corrective when it is sufficiently called forth. We do not, however, feel that censure should fall upon the passionate men only who commit these cruel outrages upon the animals under their control, but we think **THOSE WHO GIVE THEM EMPLOY, WHILE THEY ARE AWARE OF THE ENORMITIES, SHOULD RECEIVE NO SMALL SHARE OF IT.** As Dr. Darwin has said,

“ He, who allows oppression, shares the crime. ”

Let individuals of all classes show that they have the hearts and sensibilities of men, whenever any of these abuses come within their observation ; and that they, and they only, who are “ **MERCIFUL TO THEIR BEASTS,** ” shall receive their support.

The preceding remarks are not intended to apply to persons indiscriminately, having the management of horses, who, as a class, are among the most useful and deserving in our city, not a few of whom, as we often have occasion to observe, furnish frequent evidence of their good tempers, in the very commendable kindness they manifest in regard to them ; but to those who are continually and grossly violating the common feelings of humanity. There is nothing which more excites our admiration than the exhibition of a kind regard and a charitable sympathy towards the animal creation ; and we are actuated only by a common desire to induce men to become more considerate and temperate in their feelings, that we may be the less frequent witnesses of their anger, and perhaps make them truly sensible of the great obligation they have to exercise a more Christian forbearance towards so necessary and so noble an animal as the **HORSE.**

The two following articles originally appeared in the Mercantile Journal.

CRUELTY TO HORSES.

MR. EDITOR — As your Journal is one of the most independent papers in the city, in reprobating any abuse which may exist, particularly if it is marked with cruelty, I respectfully ask the favor of a small space in one of your columns to call the attention of the community to the brutal treatment of HORSES by their drivers; more especially in respect to those driven in trucks and carts. Scarcely a day passes that the writer is not a witness to some inhuman act of those having the charge of such vehicles. One of the most villanous inflictions practised by these brutes *out of the shafts*, is, striking their horses over the head or nose with the heavy butt-end of their whips — an outrage for which any being claiming a particle of humanity, should suffer as severe a penalty as if committed upon his own species.

As most of us have a high admiration and a great affection for that noble animal, the HORSE, ought we in this well-regulated city, to permit an ill usage of him so atrocious? The writer would suggest and recommend to those who give employment to this branch of labor, that they withhold their business from persons who allow the abuse of their horses in any manner whatever, either in improperly whipping or overloading them, and give it to those who are ever found “merciful to their beasts.” And let every one feel it incumbent upon himself in all such cases of barbarity, to observe the name and number upon the vehicle, whose horses are unnecessarily strained or beaten, and give notice of the same to the owners. Let the laborer be “*worthy* of his hire.”

TREATMENT OF HORSES.

MR. EDITOR — A writer in your paper has called the attention of the public to the great abuse of horses driven in the trucks and carts in this city. I wish to direct its notice to a different department of horsemanship. Our city has long been justly celebrated for its fine carriages and superior horses; no city at home or

abroad, I believe, will compare with it. A nondescript, denominated a CAB, has recently been introduced here, and they have been multiplied to a large number. They are convenient for certain occasions, but their use, which is becoming so very general, must tend to drive many of our handsome coaches out of the city, for want of support, which will be much regretted by our citizens — their prices being the same, though very unequal for a conveyance. But a more important objection to this vehicle, is, its wear and tear upon horses, they being mostly driven by boys, who, “drest in a little brief authority,” strain and overload them, apply the lash almost continually, and without much mercy.

The practice of letting horses by some of our stable keepers, to almost any and every person who applies for one, and will pay therefor, is very reprehensible, as any one can testify who may have witnessed the excessive driving, or been present, out of town, at some of the stopping places of such individuals: where the horses drink most of the *water* that is drank — the effects of the stronger liquids being reserved for their backs. The pitiable condition of some of these animals on such occasions, cannot be imagined, and it is remarkable that their owners should thus lose sight of their own interests, to say nothing of the cruelty inflicted upon the poor beasts.

A more humane feeling should exist towards so noble and useful an animal, as the HORSE. There are many individuals, nay, families, who receive their principal support from the labor of this much abused, untiring quadruped. Men talk and inveigh against the inhuman treatment which he receives, yet, at the same moment give employment and support to his unfeeling owner. Precepts teach us what our duty is — examples move us to its performance. Let us, then, discountenance and forbid this demon propensity of man to torture the poor and degraded brute, by employing those who view and treat him with a just and proper spirit. While our community continues to disregard these shameful practices, this goodly creature, designed for our use, and dependent upon our mercy, may expect no better fate; but it is to be hoped that a kinder feeling will be at once promptly manifested for the “good and gallant steed,” when his suffering condition is more duly considered.

HUMANITY.

